



Senator Eide's Week in Review
April 18-22

In the Spotlight: *Sine Die*

The 2011 Regular Legislative Session adjourns sine die this week. For those unaware, *sine die*, is Latin for 'end of days' and marks the last day of session here in Olympia. April 24th marks the last day allowed for regular session. This is, however, not the end of the legislative process.

Due to the gravity of the financial crisis our state is facing, the challenge of writing an all cuts budget is enormous. The Senate and House of Representatives have different ideas about how to balance the \$5.2 budget shortfall and a consensus has yet to be reached.

A special session is going to be called by Governor Gregoire to allow legislators to negotiate differences between proposals and pass a cohesive, balanced budget. All accompanying bills that are "necessary to implement the budget" will also be considered during special session.

Current budget proposals are NOT finalized and many changes will be made before a cohesive budget is reached.

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I believe we owe it to our communities and state to provide a thoughtful budget, scrutinizing every dollar we spend. Going into special session is something I wouldn't choose to do under any other circumstance. But, our state is in an unprecedented economic crisis and my colleagues and I need time to create a budget that is responsible, thoughtful, and sustainable in these hard economic times.

Comparing Senate and House Operating Budget **PROPOSALS**:

Negotiations between the Senate and House versions of the Operating Budget are underway. Currently, the Senate and House proposals differ by \$322 million. Though this is only a small percentage of the \$4.8 billion in cuts needed to balance the budget, the importance of negotiations over that piece cannot be understated.

The table below provides a very brief comparison of the Senate and House budget proposals to give you a sense of the choices legislators face, while highlighting some of the key similarities and differences between the **PROPOSALS**. Let me state again, current budget proposals are NOT finalized and many changes will be made before a cohesive budget is reached.

Highlighted Comparison of House & Senate Proposals

(Dollars in Thousands)

(Please note: This chart highlights only a fraction of the appropriations included in the House and Senate budget proposals. Click [here](#) to see the full comparison.)

	House	Senate
State Employees		
3 % reduction in state employee salaries	-177,075	-177,081

BUDGET RESOURCES

[Budget Calculator: Try your hand at balancing the state budget!](#)

[Budget Information](#)

[Citizen's Guide to the Budget](#)

[Legislative Guide to Washington State Property Taxes](#)

[Citizen's Guide to K-12 Finance](#)

	House	Senate
K-12 Education		
Suspend I-732	-289,950	-299,221
3% Salary Reduction for K-12 Employees	0	-251,218
K-3 Class Size in High Poverty Schools	25,008	64,330
K-12 Salary Step Freeze	56,351	0
Higher Education		
Tuition increases:		
UW, WSU, Western	12%	16%
Central, & Evergreen	11.5%	14%
Eastern	11.5%	11%
Community Colleges	11%	12%
State Need Grant	108,306	124,368
State Work Study	-45,042	-23,720
Worker Retraining	0	15,000
Social Services		
Children's Health Program	-1,524	-6,289
Basic Health Plan	-107,925	-122,041
Disability Lifeline cash grants	-100,343	-184,303
Personal care hours for long term care & developmentally disabled clients	-97,507	-98,102
Community Clinic grants	-13,550	-25,550
Natural Resources		
Discover WA Pass	-68,687	-68,687
TOTAL	-3,832,340	-4,165,179

Education:

Education is my highest priority and the reason why I became a legislator. I have a personal stake in our schools, my two children are graduates of public schools and I remain active in the PTA. Two of my family members as well as my best friend are teachers. I want to clarify a few important differences between the Senate and House education budget **PROPOSALS**:

- The Senate budget proposal cuts the House Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) reduction by half; the Senate proposes a 10% reduction and the House proposes a 19.5% cut to ALE funding. I strongly support the Senate's ALE funding proposal over the House version.
 - The Senate proposes a 3% across the board salary reduction rather than the House's proposal to freeze teacher salary step increases. The 3% across the board cut proposed by the Senate is consistent with how the budget is treating all other state employees—higher education included. Lowest paid staff, those earning under \$30 thousand, would not be impacted by the Senate budget proposal.
 - The House proposal to freeze step increases for teachers is less equitable because it impacts only teachers and not classified staff or administrative staff.
 - The Senate budget funds K-3 class size enhancements by \$40 million more than the House partially because of the reductions related to the 3% cut (the Senate allocates \$64 million and the House allocates \$25 million).
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My Priority Bills:

A lot was accomplished during the 2011 regular session. Although the legislative process is not yet complete, I believe it is important to highlight some noteworthy bills that passed out of the legislature by the April 24th *sine die* deadline:

[HB 1178](#): This bill retains the Office of Regulatory Assistance and is a companion bill to SB 5318, which I sponsored. This agency serves the public while eliminating waste from the State Regulatory system by providing valuable support to help businesses address overlapping authority, duplications and conflicts in environmental permits. It's an agency dedicated to weeding out wasteful practice in government—a smart idea during these tough economic times.

[HB 1716](#): This bill, sponsored by Representative Asay, is designed to help crack down on increasing home burglaries and thefts of gold and other precious metals. The bill was drafted based on concerns from the City of Federal Way and the Federal Way Police Department.

[HB 1846](#): This bill creates an aerospace training student loan program and is a companion bill to SB 5674, which I sponsored. Creating an aerospace student loan program is a logical step in the progression to create a 21st Century aerospace workforce in Washington State. The award of the \$35 billion Boeing tanker contract is estimated to create 11,000 new jobs in Washington. The challenge now is finding ably trained technicians for those positions. This legislation will help train workers to fill many of these family--wage, high demand aerospace positions.

[SB 5036](#): This legislation extends funding for the Department of Ecology account to manage and control excessive sea lettuce beyond the sunset date of June 30, 2012. This legislation is important for preventing over abundant growth of "sea lettuce" in the Dumas Bay area off of Federal Way. The sea lettuce can cause severe environmental damage to Puget Sound when explosive growth occurs. Decomposition of the vegetative mass lets off hydrogen sulfide gas that can cause headaches, dizziness, and nausea for hundreds of residents.

[SB 5504](#): This bill, dubbed the Colby Thompson Bill of 2011, was named after an infant from the 30th District who was abused in an unlicensed child care facility. This bill moves Washington one step closer to ensuring that our children are in the hands of educated, competent care providers.

Page I Sponsored This Week:

Thomas Widger, from Auburn, 9th grader at Thomas Jefferson High School.



Senator Eide with Page Thomas Widger

This Week's Visitors from the 30th District:

If you are ever in Olympia and are from the 30th District, please visit my office: Legislative Building 305. I would love to see you!

*Ron Mayberry; Federal Way internet Academy

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